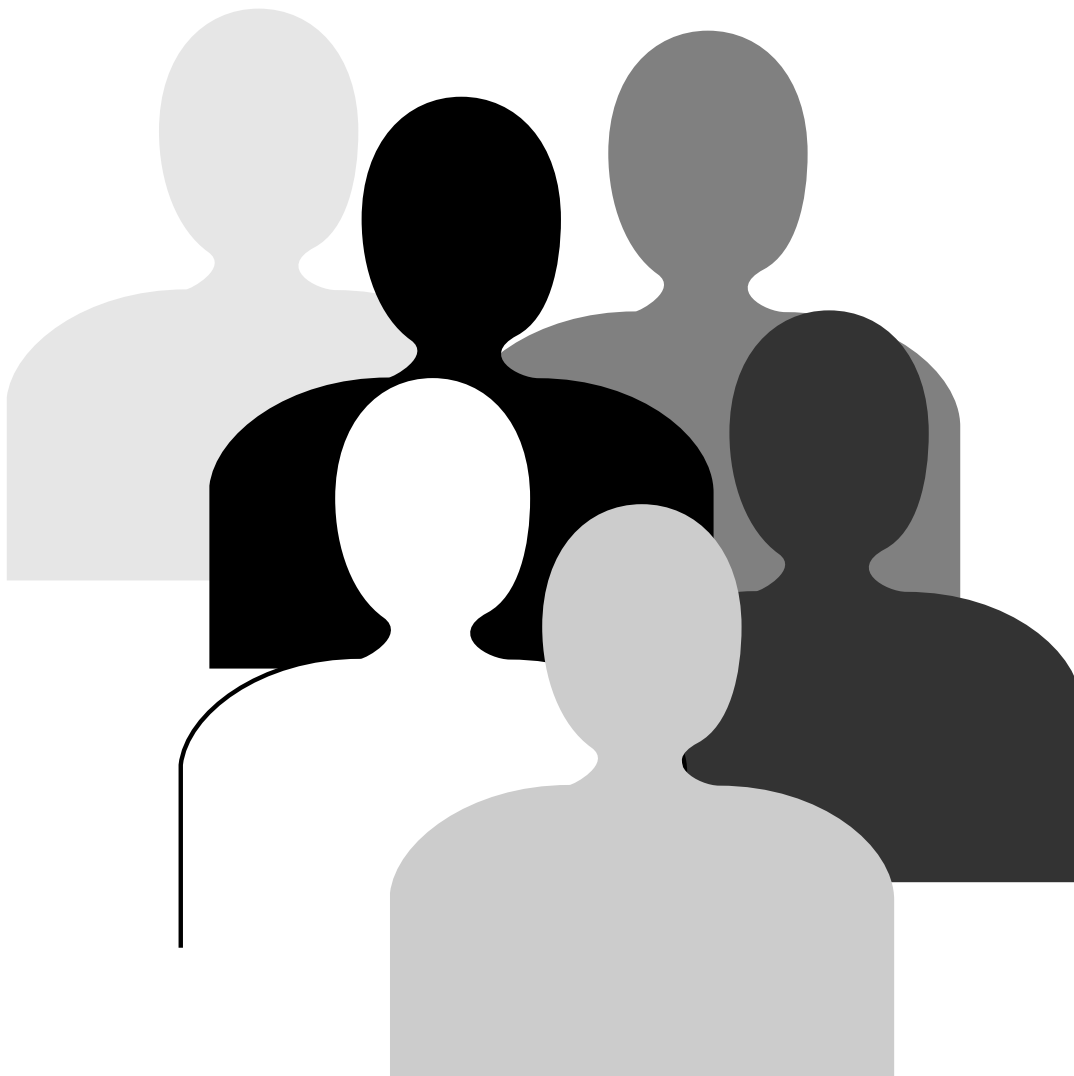


Don't Wait!

Plan Early for Education Beyond High School



Monograph Series No. 9
Reprinted March 2000

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DON'T WAIT!

PLAN EARLY

FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL!

This handbook provides information for middle school students, parents, and educators to assist them in planning for steps after high school. It is hoped that this information will encourage them to consider all options for postsecondary education, to explore and investigate careers and fields of interest, and to be aware of the demands and opportunities in the labor market. This will help to assure educational plans that take into consideration students' interests, abilities, goals, and learning styles, as well as the realities of the evolving workplace and labor market.

Planning is essential

- to help students realize that learning, including formal and informal education, is a lifelong ingredient in their growth and development;
- to match students' skills and interests with post-high school programs that will be for the students' best advantage;
- to provide students with useful information upon which informed decisions can be made: the key not only to academic success but to success in other areas of their lives; and
- to promote personal growth and development through involvement in community activities and other interests outside the classroom or workplace.

Career exploration is essential

"Career exploration, self-assessment and career decision-making skills are important components in your college preparation program. The major you choose in college undoubtedly will be preparation for a career you plan to pursue. That decision [of a major] will be much easier if you have done a great deal of career exploration, if you have taken the time to think about who you are and what you want and value and need, and if you understand and are adept at the decision-making process you will use throughout your lifetime in making career decisions.

"Some high schools have career development built into the curriculum for all students. If your school does not, ask your guidance counselor to assist you in learning about career information systems and books, in taking interest inventories, and in arranging job shadowing."
(Gibney, Laura, The College Admissions Process. Phi Delta Kappa, 1992)

Awareness of demands and opportunities in the labor market is essential

Most students and parents readily state that one of the reasons for going to college is to "get a good job." Thoughtful educational planning takes into consideration not only what the student is capable of learning and would like to learn, but also what the marketplace will need in the future. The next pages present information about education, employment trends, and labor market demands that may be helpful to those who are planning for steps after high school.

EDUCATIONAL FACTORS THAT MAY INFLUENCE PLANNING

Planning for the years after high school is more a question of helping youngsters to decide what they want to do with their life than choosing the best college to get into.

Parents and educators who spend the time, emotion, and energy necessary to help students consider future plans have one key motive — what is best for the student. It can be presumed that if you're taking the time to read this publication, you care about your children and their future. "Planning for the years after high school is more a question of helping youngsters decide what they want to do with their life than choosing the best college to get into." (The Question Is College, xiv) If you care about their whole life, not just a college destination, you and they must think about *if* they will go to college and *what they will do* after college before focusing on *which* college to attend.

Thinking about what they want to do and how they want to live the rest of their lives are important for all students, regardless of whether or not they will go to college. Some of the most disillusioned and dejected students are those who never considered any path other than a four-year college, and then realize after a semester or a year or two years that this is not what they want to do. It is unfair to paint a picture that says a four-year college is the only pathway to success.

Having an idea about what they want to do with any education or training they receive after high school will help students in decision-making about whether to go to college, what kind of college to attend, and which college(s) to approach. "College is an expensive investment of time and money, and decisions about college should be made cautiously and with purpose." (The Question Is College, p10) What to study and whether to go to college are decisions that go hand in hand with one another.

College is an expensive investment of time and money, and decisions about college should be made cautiously and with purpose.

Most high school students think they'll finish a 4-year college degree. Most won't!

Over 70 percent of today's high school students will never be four-year college graduates. Consider the statistics which follow as you think about the realities of higher education your student will face:

- The majority (94.7%) [of high school students] express the intent to continue their education
- Most (83.9%) want a degree from a 4-year college
- Despite early intentions, only 50-60 percent of HS graduates attempt a 4-year college program of study
- Only about 25 percent of all American workers have a bachelor's degree or higher

Almost all high school youth seeking to compete in the emerging information-oriented, high skills occupational society must seriously consider enrolling in some form of postsecondary education.

Let's personalize those statistics. Consider that there are four children in your family (or your class or your neighbor's household). Statistically, only one of those children will finish a 4-year college degree. Think about what advice, support, and help in exploring other options you want for your other three children as they plan their paths to a happy, satisfying, self-supporting, and meaningful future. Alternatives do need to be considered, because it will be increasingly important for workers to have some kind of postsecondary training in order to be competitive in the labor market. It seems certain "that almost all high school youth seeking to compete in the emerging information-oriented, high skills occupational society must seriously consider enrolling in some form of postsecondary education." (Kenneth Hoyt in the forward to Helping Your Child Choose A Career)

Parents and students need to openly consider many options for education and training after high school for a number of reasons: (1) because many students simply don't want to pursue a 4-year degree, (2) because many who attempt a 4-year program of study never finish, (3) because for many students other avenues of learning are more beneficial, interesting, and meaningful, and (4) because jobs of the future will require increasingly more education or training and higher-level skills.

ECONOMIC FACTORS THAT MAY INFLUENCE PLANNING

To truly put the students' interests first, it is critical that parents, teachers, and counselors help students foresee the work world they will enter and encourage students to consider all postsecondary options to prepare for that world.

There are many good reasons for and measurable benefits of going to college other than those that are employment-related, but the reason most often noted by a great majority (82%) of college freshmen as very important in deciding to go to college was "to get a better job." The next most noted reason given by 75 percent of the respondents in the survey of American college freshmen conducted by the American Council on Education in 1993 was "to make more money." Since there is clearly an employment motivation among those seeking postsecondary education, it is helpful to look at how education, income potential, and employment relate.

The most often noted reason for going to college was "to get a better job."

A direct relationship between more education and higher income is apparent. The labor market generally favors those with more education. Workers with more education and higher-level degrees typically earn more income over a lifetime and they experience fewer periods of unemployment than

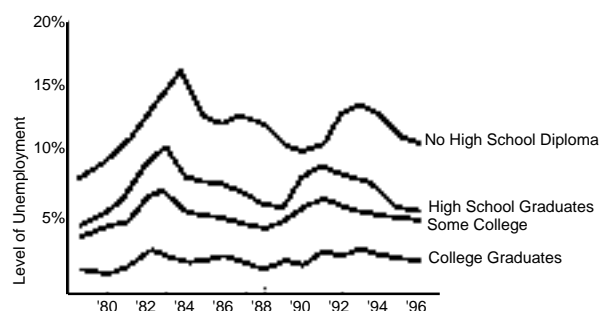
Median weekly earnings of full-time workers by level of education, 1996

	Men	Women
All levels	\$584	\$435
High school or equiv	\$504	\$361
Some college, no degree	\$571	\$411
Associate degree	\$612	\$473
Bachelor's degree	\$767	\$592

workers with less education. However, this appears to be true only if the higher education is focused or results in a degree. Workers with some college, but no degree were less likely to be in college-level jobs and earned less than workers with an associate degree or a bachelor's degree. (*Occupational Outlook Quarterly*, Summer, 1998) The chart to the left shows average earnings per week in 1996 of workers with various levels of education. Note that workers who had an associate (2-year) degree had a higher average income than those who had attended but

not finished college. Workers with some college, but no degree earned less income on an average than those with either associate degrees or baccalaureate degrees.

A worker's education level also appears related to employment security. Historically, workers with higher levels of education have tended to experience fewer periods of unemployment. The chart at the right from U.S. Department of Education reports shows that: *In 1996, 9 percent of people without a high school diploma were unemployed, while only 4.8 percent of people with a high school diploma, 4.3 percent of people with some college, and 2.4 percent of people with a college degree were unemployed.*



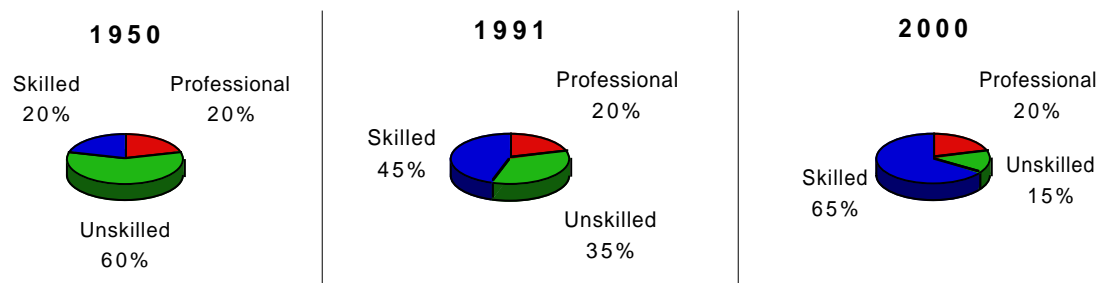
One concern in this apparently positive and overwhelming support for a traditional college education is that there is a growing mismatch between the numbers of college grads and the number of jobs requiring 4-year degrees. The U.S. Department of Labor projections indicate that:

- while the nation's colleges and universities will produce 1.2 million baccalaureate graduates each June through the year 2005, the economy will generate only about 850,000 jobs that require this level of education.
- Through 2005, one of every three college graduates will not find college-level employment.
- Only one of every two college students preparing for the professions will find that level job.
- Between 1986 and 1996, there were about 250,000 more college graduates than there were new college-level jobs.

LABOR MARKET FACTORS THAT MAY INFLUENCE PLANNING

Because so many high school students initially plan to pursue a 4-year degree and because so many college freshmen consider "getting a better job" to be a primary reason for getting a 4-year degree, it is important that they understand the labor market they will be entering.

Labor market figures show a rapidly increasing percentage of (and demand for) skilled workers and a dramatically decreasing percentage of (and demand for) unskilled workers. While the percentage of professional workers has remained steady since 1950, the percentage of skilled workers continues to grow rapidly and the percentage of unskilled workers is shrinking.



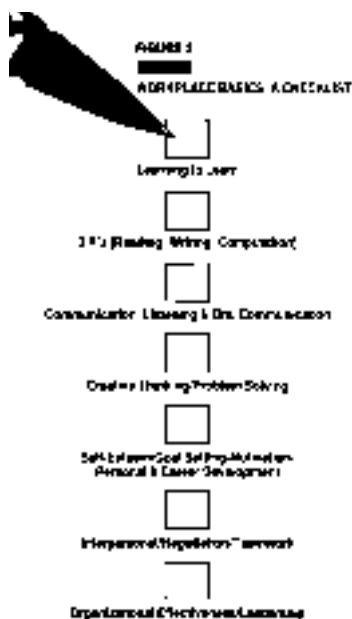
The charts above from the Bureau of Labor Statistics show that the 20 percent figure for professional jobs (those requiring a 4-year baccalaureate degree or more) has steadily stayed the same over the 40-year span from 1950 to 1991 and is not predicted to change. However, the shift in percentages between skilled and unskilled jobs is dramatic. Labor market analysts say that by the year 2000, 65 percent of all jobs will require specific skills demanding specialized education – that is, more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year college degree. Labor market analysts assert that:

- by the year 2000, 65 percent of all jobs will require specific skills demanding specialized education—that is, more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year college degree.
- of new jobs created through 2005, 80 percent will require some education beyond high school, but less than a bachelor's degree.
- of 147 million jobs by the year 2005, only 32 million, or 21 percent, will require a college degree.
- technical workers are the fastest growing and economically most promising segment of the labor force.
- in the future, the average job will require almost 14 years of formal education.
- one of the fastest growing groups of students enrolled in 2-year and technical colleges is that group of students who already have a baccalaureate degree and are returning to school to learn specific skills.

WORKPLACE DEMANDS THAT MAY INFLUENCE PLANNING

The world that today's children are preparing for is different than the one most adults were preparing for at their age. Global competition, evolving technology, and changing management practices have resulted in new career opportunities and new workplace demands. "Profound changes have reshaped the nation's economy during the last twenty years. ...These developments have also altered the nature of work and the skills required for front-line workers, managers, and professionals." (*Double Helix of Education and the Economy*, p.10)

What skills are needed in the workplace? What skills will be demanded of future workers? These questions prompted two major surveys of employment skills in the United States. The reports from these studies are highly recommended reading for anyone involved in planning for future education and employment. The findings of one survey conducted jointly by the American Society for Training and Development and the U.S. Department of Labor were reported under the title *Workplace Basics: The Skills Employers Want*. In their responses, employers created a "prescription for a well-rounded worker who has acquired a number of discrete skills and who has the capability to acquire more sophisticated skills when necessary." They said they want "basic skills associated with formal schooling. But academic skills such as reading, writing and arithmetic comprise just the tip of the iceberg." Employers also want employees who:



- can learn the particular skills of an available job—who have 'learned how to learn.'
- can hear the key points that make up a customer's concerns (**listening**) and who can convey an adequate response (**oral communication**).
- can think on their feet (**problem-solving**) and who can come up with innovative solutions when needed (**creative thinking**).
- have pride in themselves and their potential to be successful (**self-esteem**); who know how to get things done (**goal setting/motivation**); and who have some sense of skills needed to perform well in the workplace (**personal/career development**).
- can get along with customers, suppliers or co-workers (**interpersonal and negotiation skills**); who can work with others to achieve a goal (**teamwork**).
- have some sense of where the organization is headed and what they must do to make a contribution (**organizational effectiveness**); and who can assume responsibility and motivate coworkers when necessary (**leadership**).

The second report on needed skills, commonly referred to as the SCANS report, is from the Secretary's [of Labor] Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills. *What Work Requires of Schools: A SCANS Report for American 2000* was published in June, 1991, and it identifies two elements of *workplace know-how*: *competencies* and a *foundation*. There are "five competencies and a three-part foundation of skills and personal qualities that lie at the heart of job performance," says the report.

GRADES 7-8

NOW is the time to. . .

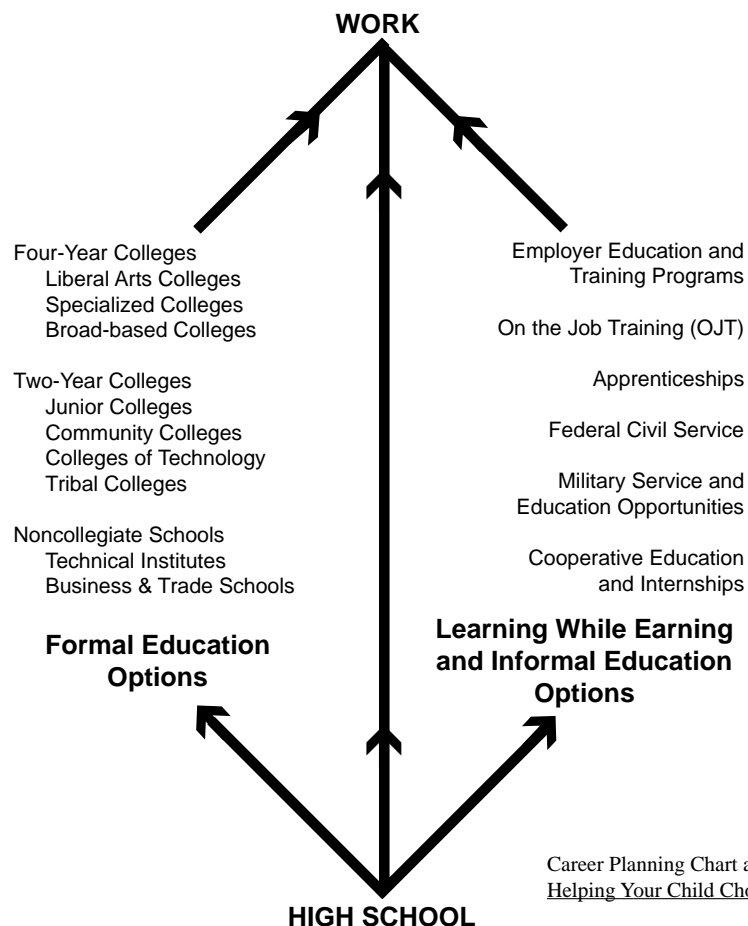
- Work hard and do your best in school. Good grades count!
- Develop basic skills and study habits: to read and listen for key points, to write clear and concise notes, to learn how to be a successful test taker.
- Learn to balance your time between your studies, extracurricular activities, athletics, work and social life. This is a life skill which becomes more difficult each year, so learn now to develop good time management skills. Take a variety of electives in core subjects, the fine arts, business and vocational/technical education rather than focusing on one area. Take a world language as early as possible.
- Ask your school counselor to provide you with information on careers that are related to your interests. A computer-assisted Career Information Delivery System (CIDS) may be available in your school counseling offices or library. Some CIDS used in Montana include the Montana Career Information System (MCIS) and DISCOVER. The CIDS programs provide searchable information about occupations, programs of study and postsecondary schools. As you investigate various career fields and postsecondary institutions, pay special attention to what specific classes and kinds of postsecondary preparation are recommended or required for those fields or schools.
- Look ahead at your 4-year high school class plan. Select high school classes that are challenging, that match your interests, and that meet the entry and preparation requirements for steps you intend to take after high school. This is important whether you intend to enter an apprenticeship, a branch of the military service, a two-year or technical college, a four-year college, or a university. While you're thinking about high school classes, don't just plan for 9th grade. Many classes have prerequisites, so you need to think about how classes are sequenced and sketch out a plan for all four years.

HOW TO meet the Montana University System 4-Year College Prep Requirements

- English—4 years
- Mathematics—3 years (to Algebra II and higher recommended)
- Social Studies—3 years (including World History/Global Studies; American History; and Government, Economics, Indian History or other third-year course)
- Science—2 years lab science. One must be Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry, or Physics; the other year may be one of those sciences or another approved college prep lab science.
- Required Electives—2 years chosen from the following:
 - foreign languages
 - computer sciences
 - visual and performing arts
 - vocational technical education

NOTE: It is essential to check out specific requirements for the programs, technical schools, or colleges in which you are interested. There may be additional requirements such as three years of science or a year of fine arts. Montana community colleges and colleges of technology require that students have a high school diploma or GED for admission, but your chances for succeeding in demanding technical programs and in the pursuit of any two-year or four-year degree will be greater if you build a strong foundation in math, science, communication, and computer skills.

- Check with the school counselor to make sure that you are signed up for the required courses that will allow you to pursue your prospective area of study in a post-high school program. If you are already certain you will attend a 2-year or 4-year college, find out before you begin your high school career what the specific admission requirements are for the colleges and programs of study in which you might be interested.
- Find people with jobs that interest you; talk to them, as well as your parents and your school counselor about different careers. Participate in job shadowing.
- Participate in extracurricular activities, enrichment programs, clubs, community service, acting, music, student government, sports, church activities, camp and jobs. *Schools and employers like to see that you have varied interests and are willing to volunteer your time and talent.*
- Investigate whether the opportunity is appropriate and available for you as a middle school student to take one of the college entrance examinations (SAT or ACT). These tests are typically taken by college-bound high school students, but the SAT CHALLENGE program facilitated by AGATE (Association for Gifted and Talented Education) targets middle school students. Good performance on these tests by you as an 8th grader will alert parents and school personnel to help you include opportunities for taking advanced /accelerated courses as you develop your academic program. Testing must be completed by January 31 and you need to register in advance of the test date. For details and application forms, check with your gifted and talented department or nearest high school counseling department.
- Identify and carefully evaluate the costs, benefits, potential outcome, conditions, labor market relevance, and "personal fit" of all possible postsecondary education/training options.



Career Planning Chart adapted from Luther B. Otto, *Helping Your Child Choose A Career*, JIST, 1996.

GRADE 9

NOW is the time to . . .

- Continue to select academically challenging high school classes and electives that fit with your interests, career objectives, and postsecondary plans.
- Check entrance requirements, preparation recommendations, and deadline dates for schools, programs, and military or employer sponsors you may be interested in after high school.
- Involve yourself in activities in your school and community: clubs, enrichment programs, speech, drama, music, student government, sports, church, camp, vocational student organizations, volunteer projects. Choose extracurricular activities that genuinely interest you.
- If you need to work, try to find a part-time job that relates to your career interests or future field of study, but remember that academics are your priority at this point. Ask about your school's "School-To-Work" and cooperative education offerings and get involved.
- Learn how to use libraries to their maximum benefit.

SCHOOL-TO-WORK . . .

is an initiative that prepares all students for work in a career or field that will be challenging and fulfilling. School-to-Work provides a source of direction for students and parents, a coordination of school and community and business activities, and relevance of the school curriculum.

For instance, a student might spend a few hours a week in a work-based learning site at a local business, learning work and social skills while receiving credit through the corresponding high school curriculum for this practical educational experience.

Job shadowing (spending time on the job with an adult in a vocation or profession in which you are interested) is also valuable.

- Complete an interest inventory. A variety of interest assessments are available. Check with your counselor to find which ones are available in your school.
- Do more career exploration and research in light of your interest inventory results and new experiences, insights, and advice you receive as you plan for your future. Revisit your occupational information sources, including printed materials, the computer-assisted CIDS, and real people who work in jobs and industries that intrigue you. Stay updated on the skills and levels of preparation that will be demanded of workers in your fields of interest.
- Start saving money for education beyond high school. Even if you're able to put only a little aside, this shows discipline and planning, traits that postsecondary institutions value.
- Think seriously and realistically about your intended steps after high school graduation. It is just as important to know *why* you are making the decisions you make as it is to decide *what* you are going to do. What you want to prepare for is a critical factor in determining *where* is the best place to pursue your continuing education and training.
- Create and keep updating a portfolio of information, documents, materials, and work samples you might use or reference as you complete job applications, school admission applications, and resumes. Maintaining a portfolio not only encourages you to keep track of important papers and events, it also serves as a way for you to track your growth and progress. Materials and information in the portfolio will help you to collect your thoughts and prepare your responses to questions in applications or interviews that deal with your skills, education, special accomplishments, experience, etc.

A portfolio could include anything that will help you to recall your experiences, document your progress and achievements, describe or show your skills and abilities, and present yourself and your background well when applying for new positions and educational or training opportunities.

A Personal Profile or Portfolio could include:

Personal identification/contact data (name, address, SSN, etc.)	Major events that have influenced the family or student
Other places lived	Special talents and abilities
Languages spoken	Planning notes (goals, plans, fears, hopes)
Personal interests, such as pets, hobbies, etc.	Favorite adults: parents, teachers, friends, mentors
Trips taken, including short descriptions of special memories	Service learning and examples of community service or volunteer work and contributions
Extracurricular activities	Results of interest inventories and other personal assessments
Transcripts and grade reports, including course descriptions	Standardized test scores
Listing of awards, honors, and special recognitions	Copies of evaluations and letters of recommendation from teachers, employers, mentors, and supervisors
Membership/offices held in community organizations/clubs	Samples of exemplary school work, papers, special projects
Paid/volunteer employment information, including names, addresses, dates, responsibilities, promotions, etc.	Best traits and areas for continued improvement
Occupational and educational research results and information	Samples of writing, including graded papers
Competency checklists from vocational/technical classes	Samples or pictures of special projects
Practical and workplace skills	Educational plans and worksheets
Statement of what I would like to do or be in the world	

WHAT SHOULD BE PUT IN A PORTFOLIO?

Reading/Language Arts

Journals
 Drafts of a piece of writing
 A piece of writing in progress
 Drawings
 A list of books read
 A list of favorite books
 Audiotapes (e.g., oral histories)
 Videotapes (e.g., debates, presentations)
 Photographs
 Treasure hunts
 Scripts
 Best papers
 Worst papers
 Student self-assessments
 Checklists of literacy objectives

Mathematics/Science

Personal budget problems
 Scale drawings
 Graphs/Tables
 Experiments
 Lab reports
 "Problems of the week"
 Audiotapes
 Computer programs
 Maps
 Tessellations
 Checklists of math/science objectives
 Student's self-assessments
 Teacher narratives

From: Jann H. Leppien and Jeanne H. Purcell, "Portfolio Making and Program Portrait Making." The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented, U of CN, 1993.

GRADE 10

NOW is the time to . . .

- Review your classes with your school counselor to make sure you are taking all the requirements for postsecondary training. Consider Advanced Placement (AP) and Tech Prep (TP) classes (see p. 21).
- Prepare for and take the PSAT (Preliminary Scholarship Aptitude Test) / NMSQT (National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test) for practice. At some high schools, this opportunity is open only to invited students. If you do take the PSAT in 10th grade, you will get your test booklet back along with your results, so you can identify weak areas and work on them before taking the test again in 11th or 12th grade.
- Focus your involvement in high school activities and interests; try new ones.
- Spend more time on the activities, outreach, and research that help you target in on career options and re-evaluate or reconfirm the decisions you have made for your future steps.
- Begin or continue community involvement, volunteer work, and job shadowing.
- Identify the satisfactions and rewards that will be important to you in future employment.
- Take an interest inventory or the ASVAB which has the Self Directed Search built in.
- Summer: visit the kinds of places you envision yourself in after high school graduation. During family trips or other travel opportunities, tour military bases, check out trade groups and employers with apprenticeship programs, visit several postsecondary campuses. Before you make campus visits, create a list of your own personal selection criteria, so you can evaluate the campuses based on what is important to you. Before you start on your trip, prepare a list of questions to ask admission counselors and set up specific appointments.

Questions for admissions representatives:

- What is the average class size for freshmen courses?
 - Are most undergraduate courses taught by graduate students or by faculty?
 - Do you have to be accepted for admission before you are awarded financial aid?
 - On the average, how much of the actual cost of attending the school does financial aid typically cover?
 - What percent of the freshman class returns for their sophomore year?
 - What percent of students graduate within 4 years? (or 2 years? if a community/technical college)
 - What are some of the unique qualities about this postsecondary institution?
 - What student groups and activities are available on campus?
 - Can credits be transferred to another school?
 - Does the program or degree of specific interest have special or additional admission requirements?
 - What is the placement rate for graduates entering employment? in state? out of state? within their degree field?
-
- If attending a two-year or four-year college is a desirable option for you, start learning all you can about financial aid and scholarship opportunities now. Don't wait until your senior year or you may miss qualifying for some scholarships. Contact your counselor or the financial aid officers at nearby or targeted colleges. Attend college- or non-profit-sponsored financial aid workshops in your community. Search the internet for information about financial aid for postsecondary education and training. Check on the financial assistance available for college through your employer and through the various branches of the uniformed services.
 - Interview people who are working in industries and occupations that interest you.

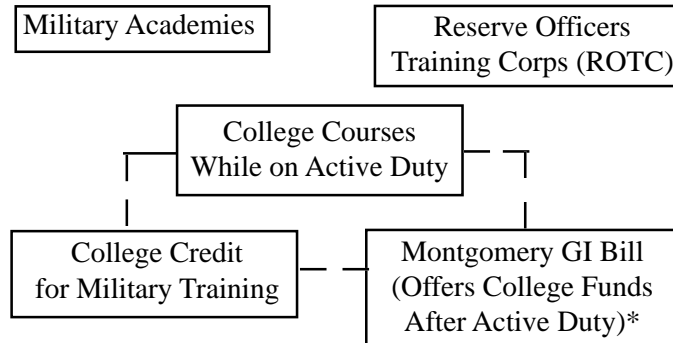
- If you are interested in military training, active duty service in a branch of the military, or other military postsecondary education opportunities, start investigating this option.

HOW TO TAKE ADVANTAGE of Armed Forces Education Programs

Ways to get postsecondary educational training through the armed forces are shown in the chart below. The armed forces offer educational programs during or after active duty. If your child prefers to work toward a college degree immediately after high school, attending one of the military academies or attending a civilian school and enrolling in the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) program are options. If your child wants to join the armed forces before attending college full-time, he or she can attend college after military service by taking advantage of the Montgomery GI Bill or by obtaining college credit for some of the military training he or she will receive.

- **Military Academies:** Each branch of the military, with the exception of the Marine Corps, has its own academy—a four-year college that offers a bachelor's degree and a commission in the military upon graduation. The military academies are highly competitive and are tuition-free to students who are admitted. The three main military academies are: (1) U.S. Military Academy, West Point, NY; (2) U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD; and (3) U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, CO.
- **Other Academies:** Two other academies operate on the same model as the military academies, with subsidized tuition in return for service. They are: (1) U.S. Coast Guard Academy, New London, CT; and (2) U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, Kings Point, NY.
- **ROTC:** In the ROTC scholarship program, the military covers most of the cost of tuition, fees, and textbooks and also provides a monthly allowance. Scholarship recipients participate in summer training while in college and fulfill a service commitment after college: full-time in active Army, part-time in National Guard or U.S. Army reserve. There are Army and Air Force ROTC programs at MSU-Bozeman and an Army ROTC program at UM-Missoula.

Military Postsecondary Education Opportunities



*These options are not mutually exclusive.

- Investigate *early admission* options at nearby 2-year or 4-year colleges. If you need more challenging courses than your high school offers, you can enroll part-time in a nearby college or take evening classes before you graduate from high school. Check if your school policy allows release time for you to attend morning or afternoon college classes. This way of getting an early start on your college credits is generally referred to as early admission, but may have a special name at specific institutions. Montana's Colleges of Technology offer a number of core courses that transfer to four-year colleges. Students still in high school can take these courses on campus, through distance learning options, or on the Internet.
- *Dual enrollment* options allow students to take college classes that are also approved to meet high school graduation requirements. Dual enrollment at some postsecondary institutions is very selective, and school district policy must allow for this option. Montana 4-year colleges expect a 2.5 GPA and ACT of 27 or SAT of 1210, most college prep courses completed, and a letter of recommendation from the high school principal or counselor.

GRADE 11

NOW is the time to . . .

- Recheck requirements for targeted careers, employers, and colleges to be sure you're getting all the classes required or recommended for your specific program of study. (e.g., Algebra and Chemistry for allied health and science programs or foreign language for some colleges).
- Continue in an academically challenging and personally satisfying curriculum, making revisions to focus on your changing interests and goals. Take classes related to your career field or area of interest, including classes that require you to apply your knowledge to real-world problems or situations and that provide practical, hands-on experience.
- Review for and take PSAT in October to gain experience taking the standardized college entrance test required by many colleges. Depending on your score, this may make you eligible for a National Merit Scholarship.
- Assume leadership roles in activities, clubs, and organizations.
- Accelerate exploration of postsecondary options: attend Career Fairs and College Days at your high school or nearby postsecondary institutions; talk to college and college of technology students and younger workers involved in corporate training programs or apprenticeships; use the Internet to search for information (see *High Tech Help*, p. 14).
- Ask yourself again *if* you want to go to college, *why* you want to go to college, and *which* kind of college best fits your needs and goals and personality. Make sure the plans you make will help you make progress toward the kind of life and work you really want.
- If formal postsecondary education is in your plans, narrow your list of prospective postsecondary institutions or options to 10-15 possible choices, and request information and application materials from them.
- Examine application forms from a number of different places and various colleges to become familiar with their content and start thinking about how you will complete these forms.

HOW TO APPLY to a College, University or Vocational School

Step 1: collect general information by reading, talking with people, asking questions, and visiting colleges.

Step 2: analyze and evaluate information. By the end of grade 11, narrow the list to 5-6 colleges, taking into consideration (a) personal values, interests and needs; (b) the variety and range of available college opportunities; (c) realistic constraints such as cost and distance; and (d) the methods used by the colleges to select a freshman class (selectivity factor). Include a safety school (one that will definitely accept you), a long shot (admissions criteria slightly beyond credentials), and 3-4 colleges having admissions criteria that match yours.

A highly selective college that receives more than 10 applications for every freshman vacancy will make a highly competitive application review. **The way you address the application process may be the critical factor determining acceptance or rejection.**

The application requires the following two kinds of information:

1. Objective information, including biographical data, information on academic performance, standardized test scores such as SATs or ACTs, Achievement Test scores, advanced placement (AP) examination grades, and additional numerical information.

2. Subjective information, including extracurricular activities, recommendations, essay and/or personal statement, and a personal interview.

Berger, Sandra L. *College Planning for Gifted Students* (1989, Council for Exceptional Children and the ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children Digest #E490) (Edited).

- If you want to keep four-year college admission as an option, register in April for the ACT and/or SAT so you can take the test(s) in June. Upon receipt of your scores, decide whether to accept the score or to begin a study plan to improve your score when you retake the test in the fall.
- Practice writing a school application essay and ask for editing by your English or writing teacher. Practice completing other forms typical to the educational or employment application process.

Summer:

- Plan tours and visit as many prospective schools or training sites as possible, making arrangements in advance with admissions and recruitment officers.
- Attend leadership camps or select educational or employment experiences to broaden your educational, work, and social experiences.
- Establish a good work record in part-time or summer job and/or activities.
- Extend the unique "you" through travel, coursework, grant work or other opportunities.
- Send for school applications to look over so you will have no "surprises" to deal with in your busy senior year (some applications may be due as early as December).

HIGH TECH HELP

Your high school counselor, public library, and nearby postsecondary library have computer programs that will help you to expand your awareness of colleges, college life, expenses, career information, and scholarships. Ask to use MCIS, DISCOVER, or whatever Career Information Delivery System (CIDS) is available, then use its school sort program and postsecondary files to search for schools that fit your needs. You'll find information in the CIDS on military careers and postsecondary education options, as well as ways to search for and get information about occupations of interest.

There are many helpful sites on the World Wide Web for career and educational research and planning. Visit these sites and follow links to other web sources that can provide helpful information.

- America's Career Info Net — <http://www.acinet.org/>
- American Association of Community Colleges — <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/>
- Bowling Green State University Career Services — <http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/careers/>
- Career Key — <http://www2.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/l/lkj/>
- Career Resource Center — <http://www.careers.org>
- College Board Online — <http://www.collegeboard.org/index.html>
- College Guide, The — <http://www.jayi.com/>
- College Edge — <http://www.collegeedge.com>
- College Net — <http://www.collegenet.com>
- College View — <http://www.collegeview.com>
- Dept. of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics — <http://stats.bls.gov>
- fastWEB (free scholarship search) — <http://www.fastweb.com>
- Federal Student Financial Aid Information Center — <http://www.finaid.org> (also call 1-800-4FED-AID)
- Montana School-To-Work — <http://www.montana.edu/wochesw/docs/webpage.html>
- North Carolina State University's Career Center — <http://www.fis.ncsu.edu/career/career.htm#research>
- Occupational Outlook Handbook — <http://www.bls.gov/ocohome.htm>
- Peterson's Education Center — <http://www.petersons.com>
- Princeton Review — <http://www.review.com>
- U.S. Department of Education — <http://www.ed.gov/thinkcollege/early>
- U.S. News Online Find Your Career — <http://www4.usnews.com/usnews/edu/beyond/bccguide.htm>

GRADE 12

NOW is the time to . . .

- Keep a calendar! Deadlines, due dates, and follow-through are critical in whatever postsecondary alternative you pursue. Set a schedule for dealing with college, training, or military applications. Work on them steadily and keep a file on each one you approach.
- If you are college-bound or may be at some time in the future, register in September to take the October/November SAT or ACT test. Check dates with your school counselor. SAT or ACT scores may not be required by Montana Colleges of Technology, but they are accepted and do help to determine your placement in freshman-level classes.
- Continue academically challenging coursework and maintain high grades. The senior year is no time to slack off; it is an important time in your academic journey and preparation for your "next steps" in education, training, or work.
- If you are planning to start your postsecondary career at a College of Technology or any of the Montana colleges that offer 2-year degrees and participate in the Tech Prep program, be sure to enroll in any high school classes that carry Tech Prep credit related to your intended program of study or approved electives.
- If you intend to pursue further training through active duty in the uniformed services, contact a recruiter from each branch of service to determine what training and educational assistance they will guarantee before you commit to any specific branch.
- If you plan to attend a Montana College of Technology (COT), be aware that some high demand programs are selective or have waiting lists. Apply as soon as possible and take prerequisite courses while you wait for admission to the program. Prerequisite courses are courses you must complete before you can be admitted to some specific programs, even though you are already admitted to the college. You can start attending COTs any semester, but specific programs of study may have Spring and/or Fall semester starts.
- Continue leadership roles in selected activities both in and out of school.
- Sign up in the counselor's office for postsecondary representatives' visits to your school.
- If your high school schedule allows, consider taking a college course or two during your senior year through your nearby college or college of technology. Through this early admission option, you can take college courses on campus, through distance learning options, or on the Internet. Be sure the courses you take are approved for transfer to the college you plan to attend when you start as a full-time student.
- Narrow your list of targeted colleges to the five or six that most interest you and that have a good reputation in your targeted program of study.
- Check announcements often for scholarship information. Watch application deadlines for scholarship opportunities. Many have March 1 deadlines. Montana Presidential and Honors Program Scholarship applications must be postmarked by January 10.
- Complete the application process for selected schools before priority deadlines (usually December 30). Watch for unique dates for specific programs at some colleges. Keep a record or copy of everything you send to or receive from each college.
- Submit financial aid forms as soon as possible after January 1, but always before any deadlines for preferred aid (usually February 15). Parents need to file income tax early.

- During February, check with all admissions offices to make sure all needed material is available to them; if not, ask them to help you get it.
- Check your medical and immunization records to be sure you are up-to-date on all required vaccinations and shots.
- By April 15, most 4-year colleges and universities will have notified you of acceptance and of your financial aid package.
- By May 15, you may negotiate your financial aid package.
- By May 15, usually you must notify all colleges of your decision.

WHAT COLLEGES LOOK FOR

- *Academic performance:* Grade-point average and class rank.
- *Academic rigor:* Evidence of superior ability in the form of honors, GT, or AP courses. (Some colleges ignore honors or GT classes because they are of unknown quality.)
 - Depth of study* in areas such as foreign languages and mathematics.
 - Quality:* Four or five academic subjects each year (English, mathematics, science, history, and English).
 - Balance:* Evidence that the student took a broad curriculum (mathematics and science, history, and English).
 - Trends:* Evidence as to whether the student's grades are gradually improving each year. Recent performance is the most important indicator of the student's current level of ability and motivation.
- *Consistency:* The parts of the application should fit together to provide a common theme and make the student "come alive" on paper. Recommendations should support and be consistent with both the academic record and what the student says about himself or herself. A quirk in the transcript (e.g., a low grade in an academic course during 11th or 12th grade) should be accompanied by an explanation. High SAT scores combined with a relatively low GPA provide an inconsistent picture of an applicant (e.g., high ability/low motivation). The student should address these situations in an essay or personal statement.
- *Standardized tests:* PSATs, SATs, ACTs, and Achievement Tests are the only objective way a college can compare students from all parts of the country. Some large universities screen a vast number of applicants by combining each student's SAT or ACT score with GPA and class rank. Students who are not good test takers should avoid such colleges or make sure that their scores are not so low that they can be eliminated from consideration. Selective schools may emphasize achievement test scores. If students wait until senior year, only three tests may be taken.
- *Extracurricular activities* and other supporting material: When highly selective colleges decide between two students who are academically equal, the creative presentation of extracurricular activities, the quality of recommendations, the essay or personal statement, the interview, and other supporting material make a difference.
- *Community service:* Admissions officers know that an altruistic student, one who contributes to community life without regard for compensation, is likely to contribute to college life, be academically successful, and form a long-term attachment to the college or university.
- *Recommendations:* Counselor and teacher recommendations should present a positive picture of the applicant, distinguish between the applicant and others who are equally qualified, and be consistent with the rest of the student's application.
- *The application essay:* The essay can reassure the admissions committee that the student is capable of college-level work.

Berger, Sandra L. *College Planning for Gifted Students* (1989, Council for Exceptional Children and the ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children Digest #E490) (Edited).

"Admissions Officers look for distinguishing characteristics; students who have done something unusual, something that sets them apart from the rest of the class presidents, valedictorians and those with high SAT scores.

"Internationalization of our economy with those of other nations means 21st Century students will not only be competing with people graduating from the best schools in the U.S., but also with those qualified individuals from other countries." (Lester Thurow, The Future of Capitalism, 1996)

PLAN AHEAD FOR COSTS

The most important step in getting financial aid is to **GET ORGANIZED!**

1. Start with your high school counselor who receives information about various scholarships and posts them at your school.
2. The best source of aid is the colleges themselves. Read bulletins carefully and call or write immediately if you have questions.
3. Even if you think you can't afford the school you want, apply to the school and for financial aid. Then just wait and see.
4. To improve your chances, get the forms in as early as possible. If you have special family circumstances that aren't covered on the form, write a letter explaining your situation.

SCHOLARSHIP INFO VIA COMPUTER & INTERNET

Free information is available about scholarships on software programs and the Web. Ask your high school counselor to use the financial aid sort program on your school's CIDS to do your own search of national, state and local scholarships. Beware of companies that promise "guaranteed" scholarships for a high fee, suggest that everyone is eligible, or pressure you to respond quickly.

On the Internet, visit **College Choice** (<http://www.gse.ucla.edu/mm/cc/links/aid.html>) or **National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators** (<http://www.finaid.org>).

HOW MUCH will college cost?

College costs have increased steadily in recent years, rising much faster than the rate of inflation. During the same period that average college costs have risen markedly, median family income has fallen. It is important for students and families to foresee the costs of whatever postsecondary option they pursue.

For the 1997-98 school year, tuition for full-time, in-state students at Montana's public 4-year colleges and universities ranged between \$2,400 and \$2,670. Additional costs incurred for housing or room and board, and expenses such as books and fees add \$4,000-\$7,000 each year.

For the same school year, annual tuition for full-time, in-state students at Montana's Colleges of Technology ranged between \$1,965 and \$2,230. At Montana's three community colleges, the range was \$1,442 to \$2,291. Residents of the county in which the community college is located may qualify for discounted tuition rates. Costs vary widely at Montana's seven tribal colleges depending on the student's Native American status and residency. Indian students or students of Indian descent may qualify for significant tuition discounts from regular rates which are typical of other 2-year colleges in the state.

Out-of-state public college costs vary widely. Rates are typically higher for students who are not residents of the state in which the college is located. Parents and students considering enrollment at out-of-state public institutions should check college catalogs and computer resources to investigate costs and the possibility that a college in a western state may participate in the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) program, giving students from partnering western states a tuition break.

As a rule, private colleges and schools, 2-year or 4-year, in-state or out-of-state, cost more than their publicly supported counterparts. Private colleges can cost \$100,000 for a four-year education. Rates for tuition and fees at Montana private 4-year colleges and universities for 1997-98 ranged from \$8,490 to \$11,316. Tuition and fees at private business and trade schools, usually 2-year institutions or their equivalent, range from \$7,300 to \$7,500 for 1997-98.

Remember, you are investing in what you believe to be the benefits of an education as it will impact the future. Current statistics show that someone with a bachelor's degree will earn as much as \$800,000 to \$1 million more in a lifetime than someone with only a high school diploma. Workers with higher levels of education or specific skills in demand are also less likely to be laid off or face unemployment. Don't fixate on cost first, however, when choosing a college. Match your needs with the postsecondary institution's offerings and characteristics: preferred program of study, population, class size, placement in related jobs or graduate school, research, internships, liberal arts, etc.

Scholarships, grants and loans are available at every college. Find out about them in your school counseling office and plan to apply when you are a junior. In the meantime, saving money, talking with your parents or guardian about your financial goals, and working part-time will get you on the financial planning road to a higher education.

TYPES of financial aid

Need-based aid is given because the student would not be able to afford college otherwise. Need is determined by subtracting the amount parents and the student are expected to contribute from the total cost of college.

Merit-based aid is given because of some special talent or attribute.

Federal Grants are possible for students whose families have low income. Federal Pell Grants for 1998-99 range from \$400-\$3,000 a year; Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants (FSEOG) may be up to \$4,000 a year.

Federal lower-interest loans are available such as a Perkins loan (up to \$3,000 @ 5% interest), Stafford loans (8.25% interest) and Federal Direct Student Loans from the government instead of a bank. Also, there is a loan for parents (PLUS) to cover costs not covered by other aid. Parents and students should check with financial aid administrators as they investigate federal grants and loans, since guidelines change yearly and so many factors determine eligibility.

Summer employment - Some colleges expect students to save between \$800 and \$1,800 for college during high school. In addition, some colleges expect that you will earn about \$1,500 each summer while you are in college.

Work Study is offered by some colleges as part of the financial aid package. This consists of a part-time job (8-15 hours a week) that earns you \$1,200 to \$2,000 a year toward your expenses, as set by the individual institution. Some colleges try to match your job with your academic interests, especially for upperclassmen.

Colleges always expect parents to contribute something toward their children's college education.

Upward Bound, a federally funded program which targets students from low-income and first-generation college families provides remedial instruction, academic advising, a college prep summer school, college visits and stipends to aid such students in enrolling in a postsecondary school.

ROTC (Reserve Officers' Training Corps) sponsors an enormous scholarship program. It pays for tuition and books and provides \$150 a month for expenses. The army, air force, navy and marine corps have ROTC units at a great many colleges. In exchange for the scholarship, participants agree to serve six years as an officer in the military following graduation.

HOW TO take out a loan

Before taking out any kind of loan, be sure to ask the following kinds of questions:

- What are the exact provisions of the loan?
 - What is the interest rate?
 - Exactly how much has to be paid in interest?
 - What will the monthly payments be?
 - When will the monthly payments begin?
 - How long will the monthly payments last?
 - What happens if you miss one of the monthly payments?
 - Is there a grace period for paying back the loan?
-
- Read and understand the up-front origination fees (usually 4%).
 - Ask about a "good borrower" clause on the loan which could drop the interest rate by up to 2 percent, after payments are made on time for the first two years.
 - Look for flexible repayment plans: some allow you to pay less in the beginning and more at the end.
 - Make sure the lender is serving your loan with toll-free customer service.

In all cases, a loan must be repaid. Failure to repay a student loan can ruin a person's credit rating and make finances more difficult in the future.

PLANNING FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS

ETHNIC/MINORITY STUDENTS

Because of language and cultural background differences, minority students from Black, Hispanic, and Native American backgrounds may be less likely to have been selected for postsecondary education programs and may be less likely to perform well on standardized achievement tests than their nonminority peers. For instance, ethnic/minority children have been under-represented in gifted programs where identification has relied only on test scores and teacher nominations. In addition, these students may have lower career aspirations because of lower societal expectations. Nevertheless, minority students may be active leaders in their cultural communities. Career counseling for these students may be most effective when it focuses on raising career aspirations and emphasizes out-of-class accomplishments as indicators of possible career directions. Career planning should also build a strong ethnic identity to avoid later conflict between ethnic identity and achievement in majority society.

Many Montana schools have counseling and special programs for ethnic/minority students. Colleges with these programs offer support services and a support network for minority students and include programs such as the Center for Native American Studies and American Indian Research Opportunities at MSU-Bozeman; American Indian Science and Engineering Society, American Indian Student Services; and the Indian Club at Rocky Mountain College. Several Montana colleges are served by Educational Opportunity Centers which focus on the needs and issues of Native American and first generation college students. The University of Great Falls and most Montana public colleges have a United Tribes Club or similar minority club, whose purpose is to provide cultural awareness and connections for minority students. MSU-Billings offers Multicultural Student Services, an Intertribal Indian Club, the American Indian Science and Engineering Society, and Native American Studies. A bachelor's degree with a major in Native American Studies (NAS) is available at UM-Missoula.

GIFTED

Gifted and talented children are sometimes at greater risk than the average in denying the values of post-high school education. These talented students may find K-12 classes lacking in challenge and may react with underachievement, inappropriate behavior, and loss of self-esteem. A trusted counselor can be of great help at all levels, as well as older student mentors.

Parents, educators, and counselors can encourage these students to take advanced courses like Advanced Placement and honors classes. As a parent, you should seek counsel with the school if you feel your child needs to be accelerated in one or more areas; then help find appropriate mentors to provide guidance and inspiration. Use school and professional counseling services when needed.

Some colleges have special programs for motivated and talented students: the Davidson Honors College at UM, the University Honors Program at MSU-Bozeman, and the Undergraduate Scholars

Program at MSU-Bozeman, which supports research/creative projects in all disciplines. Most 2-year and 4-year colleges allow course challenges.

Student Exchange Programs in the U.S. or abroad are available at some schools for up to one year.

Individualized programs of study to achieve a degree are available at most of Montana higher education schools, usually in or after the junior year.

- Montana AGATE offers continuous information on gifted children for parents and educators in newsletters and an annual conference (\$15 membership). Contact: MT AGATE, 3091 S Daffodil, Billings, MT 59102.
- A gifted and talented specialist at the Montana Office of Public Instruction can answer questions and help with educational planning or advocacy. Contact: MT OPI, P.O. Box 202501, Helena, MT 59620-2501.
- Other information about gifted children:
NAGC (National Association for Gifted Children), 1707 L St. NW, SUITE 550, Washington, D.C. 20036 (202/785-4268).
NRCG/T (National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented), U of CN, 362 Fairfield Rd., U-7, Storrs, CT 06269-2007.

GIRLS AND WOMEN

Persisting sex-role stereotypes and the continued socialization of girls for secondary roles mean that, despite great gains in certain fields such as medicine and law, girls are less likely than boys to achieve their full potential. Many girls are underprepared academically, taking fewer math and science courses and less challenging social studies classes. Therefore, they have fewer options for college majors and career goals.

Career planning should emphasize rigorous academic preparation, particularly in math and science; maintaining high career goals; and awareness of the barriers women face in achieving career goals.

Examples of some resources for girls and women in Montana higher education institutions include MSU-Bozeman's Women's Center and five classes offered in Women's Studies at MSU-Billings.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Some gifted/disabled students or students with specific learning or physical disabilities may not be aggressively encouraged to pursue further education. The reality is that, with support services offered by many colleges, these students could avail themselves of and succeed in higher education. Programs offering support for these students may be called "access" or "student support" systems. Parents and students should investigate the services and support programs available at colleges they are considering.

Support services may involve developmental courses, resource labs or learning centers, counseling services, tutoring, interpreters, and other special services. A braille reader/printer, reading machine, VisuTech print enlarger, sign language interpreters, tutors, and other support services are available at MSU College of Technology-Great Falls for vision and hearing impaired students. Examples of programs and services at other Montana colleges include Disabled Support Services and Student Opportunity Services at MSU-Billings; Advance By Choice and Disabled Student Services at MSU-Bozeman; The Learning Center at Montana Tech; Services for Academic Success (SAS) at Rocky Mountain College; the Academic Resource Center at Carroll College; and The Learning Center, Student Support Services, and Special Needs Services at the University of Great Falls.

ADVANCED COURSES

ACCELERATION

Some Montana schools will **accelerate** students in their strong subject(s), usually by Individual Education Plan (IEP) in grades K-8, and sometimes by testing out of high school subjects. If an accredited college is nearby, a high school may allow **concurrent enrollment** during the junior or senior year. Check at your local high school for acceleration options.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES

College Board Advanced Placement (AP) courses and exams challenge students on a higher-academic level, introducing them to and preparing them for a college education while still in high school. Administered by The College Board of New York and taught at local high schools, AP classes allow students to participate in a college-level course and possibly earn college credit while still in high school. High schools in Montana offer a variety of AP courses, including Art, Art History, Studio Art, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Economics, English, Environmental Science, French, German, Government and Politics, U.S. History, European History, Latin, Mathematics, Statistics, Music Theory, Physics, Psychology and Spanish. There are no charges for the courses in the local schools. Exams for college credit are approximately \$75 each, a big savings compared to actual college course costs. Contact Advanced Placement, Western Regional Office, Ste. 480, 2099 Gateway Place, San Jose, CA 95110-1017 (408/452-1400) ldaters@collegeboard.org.

COMPACTING

Compacting is pretesting a student over a unit or units, and if the student already comprehends 90 percent of the material, allowing him/her to have alternative work either in the same area or an area of the student's choice or strength. Contact your local school to find teachers who use compacting.

HONORS CLASSES

Honors Classes are offered by many Montana high schools. The content is more challenging than the regular curriculum. Most honors classes are in English/Language Arts, History, Science and Math. Some middle schools also offer honors classes or cluster able students in one section. Contact your local high school for information on Honors Classes.

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

International Baccalaureate, based in Geneva, Switzerland, with N. A. headquarters in NY City, allows students to earn an internationally recognized diploma. Students must complete an intense course of study ending in six internationally graded examinations. Requirements: a special course in "Theory of Knowledge," a 4,000-word thesis on a subject of each student's special interest, and 100 hours of aesthetic or social services activities. Students may receive college credit for each exam passed and, if full requirements are met, at some universities enter as a sophomore. Because the students must become proficient in six academically demanding areas, including a foreign language, they also hold a distinct advantage in gaining admission to the college of their choice. Contact International Baccalaureate, Peterson House, Fortran Rd., St. Mellons, Cardiff CF3 0LT, United Kingdom. info@ibo.org.

LEARN AND SERVE MONTANA

Learn and Serve Montana is a school-based program to promote academic and personal growth in young people through classroom instruction and community service. Schools can apply for up to \$3,000 for service learning by K-12 school-based projects. (Schools now involved in Broadus, Missoula, Hardin, Target Range, Canyon Creek Billings, Chief Joseph M.S. Bozeman, Helena and Arlee.) Contact June Atkins at 406-444-3664 or E-Mail: jatkins@state.mt.us.

MENTORSHIPS AND JOB SHADOWING

Mentors for many subjects exist in local communities. Some Montana schools have programs like Career Shadowing using mentors; others use community mentors for individual student independent studies. Contact your local high school.

EARLY ADMISSION

Students still enrolled in high school are invited to take college courses prior to graduation through **early admission** programs. Typically, these courses are taken during evenings or during released time from the high school schedule. Introductory courses and core transfer courses are the most popular. Students can take some of these college courses on campus. Others are available over the Internet or through other distance learning modes. Some colleges give special names to their early admissions program, such as **Quick Start** from MSU Northern--classes offered on Distance Learning systems to high schools for college credit in introductory courses like Educational Psychology, Business, Environmental Health, Speech, Psychology, Natural Sciences and College Algebra. Costs for early admission courses tend to parallel regular tuition for on-campus courses, but distance learning or Internet options may carry additional fees.

TECH PREP CLASSES

Tech Prep Classes provide students at participating high schools an opportunity to receive college credit for high school achievements/coursework as they undertake an articulated program at a participating college offering 2-year degrees, a community college, or a college of technology. High school teachers and college faculty jointly determine which courses qualify as Tech Prep articulated classes and specify the competencies students must demonstrate. Students must earn a B or better in the high school's articulated class in order to be eligible for the Tech Prep credit in college. Contact your local high school counselor or nearby 2-year college for more information.

CHALLENGING PROGRAMS AND COMPETITIONS

GENERAL

ACADEMIC SUMMER CAMPS

Academic Summer Camps are held for various grade levels at many colleges and universities in Montana: Peaks and Potentials at MSU-Bozeman; Kids on Campus at Rocky Mountain College, Billings; Gifted Institute at Carroll College, Helena; K.R.Schwanke Honors Institute at UM, Missoula; Kids on Kampus at UM-Dillon; Montana Natural Resources Youth Camp at UM Lubrecht Experimental Forest; Red Lodge Music Festival; UM Music Festival, Missoula; Glacier Institute Young Naturalist Camps, Glacier Park; and many language, sports, and computer camps around the state.

- Contact various schools and institutions in spring for information.

AGATE gives eight \$250 scholarships each summer (applications from school counselor or AGATE member).

Contact: AGATE, 3091 S. Daffodil, Billings MT 59102.

FUTURE PROBLEM SOLVING

Future Problem Solving is a year-long international educational program in which teams of four students use a six-step process to solve complex scientific and social problems of the future. Winning teams in divisions 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12 compete at state, regional and International FPS conferences. Challenges students to think, make decisions and sometimes carry out their solutions. 45-minute video available.

- Contact: Future Problem Solving Program, 315 West Huron, Suite 140-B, Ann Arbor, MI 48103-4203, 313/998-7663.

HUGH O'BRIAN LEADERSHIP SEMINARS

Hugh O'Brian Leadership Seminars for high school sophomores. 1) All eligible to apply for HOBY State Leadership Seminars; basis for selection is leadership potential. Three-day, expense-paid weekend seminar with today's leaders around theme "America's Incentive System." 2) International Leadership Seminar in August; participants chosen from state seminars.

- Contact Lori Case, Montana Hugh O'Brian Youth Foundation, Inc., P.O. Box 5829, Missoula, MT 59806-5829 or your high school principal who will receive a nomination kit in late September.

KNOWLEDGE MASTER

Knowledge Master Open academic competition involves a computer disk (Apple II, Mac or IBM) of 200 curriculum-based questions which teams (av. 15) work to complete in 2-3 hours. Middle school (up through 8th), jr. high (up through 9th) and high school (up through 12th) divisions. Entry fee \$32 with practice disks at \$17. Knowledge Master Library, a data base of 80,000 questions available. Involves concepts, knowledge, basics, skills and current events--with intermittent puns for fun!

- Contact: Academic Hallmarks, P.O. Box 998, Durango, CO 81302; 800/ 321-9218; Fax 970/247-0997.

MONTANA ACADEMIC CHALLENGE

The Montana Academic Challenge is a half-hour quiz show for high school teams (1 each senior, junior, sophomore, freshman and one "wild card" from any class) representing a Montana high school or combination of schools. The matches are televised and taped at a local competition site. State competition in Helena in the spring; cash prizes to schools who reach the state championship tournament. Questions on geography, history, words and meanings, math, science, literature and government. Carried by Billings KTVQ, Glendive KXGN, Great Falls KRTV; 34 High Schools in 1997. Privately sponsored by Montana Television Network, Montana telephone and electric companies.

- Contact Ian Marquand, P.O. Box 4827, Missoula, MT 59806; 406/542-4400; ian@kpax.com.

NATIONAL SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES

National School Assemblies offers performances by outstanding personalities in music, drama, art, science, physical education and various life activities. Uniquely talented, energetic artists of superior reputation are carefully screened and auditioned before school audiences to ensure quality and suitability. Since 1935, NSA has delivered over half a million performances to thousands of schools in 30 states.

- Contact: National School Assemblies, 28245 Avenue Crocker, Suite 102, Valencia, CA 91355; 805/257-3381.

ODYSSEY OF THE MIND

Odyssey of the Mind is a program involving many skills such as problem solving, creative thinking and team work. Problems are sent to individual schools or districts (\$135 school membership) where self-selected groups of 5-6 students work on the problems, skits, and thinking skills. Parents or teachers coach. Local, district, state and national competitions give the participants an experience of competition and learning in a spirit of enthusiasm and enjoyment for grades K-college.

- Contact: Odyssey of the Mind, P.O. Box 547, Glassboro, NJ 08028-0547; 609/881-1603; Web: <http://www.odyssey.org>.

SCHOOL-TO-WORK INITIATIVE

National School-to-Work Initiative, financed by Department of Labor and Department of Education (1994), places students in community work places (hospitals, small businesses, government agencies, factories and corporations) during the school day to give them experience in the work place, and to make connections: how the knowledge they are gaining in school applies in the world. Training within the curriculum to gain leadership, professional, and social skills in society and business.

- Contact: Marion Reed, MT OPI, Box 202501, Helena, MT 58620; 406/444-3000.

CHALLENGING PROGRAMS AND COMPETITIONS (CONT.)

HUMANITIES

ARTISTS-IN-SCHOOLS

The Montana Arts Council Artists-in-Schools/Community Program, seeking to enrich and support quality arts education, makes available artists of all kinds (writers, musicians, dancers, dramatists, media artists) to school classrooms, supporting half the cost of the visiting artists. The 1 to 4-week residencies provide firsthand experiences, role models, strengthening of existing arts efforts and stimulus for the community, while also providing for the artist's personal work time and the opportunity to participate in the total life of a school or community.

- Contact: Montana Arts Council Artists-in-Schools/Community Program, 316 N. Park Ave., Room 252, Helena, MT 59620, 406/444-6430.

JUNIOR GREAT BOOKS

Junior Great Books is a program of seminar discussions of literature, using the inquiry method and focusing on ideas. Sustained interpretive work on a text fosters in-depth understanding for K-12 students. An acclaimed teacher/leader workshop in inquiry-based instruction is available at many sites and times of the year throughout the U.S.

- Contact: Great Books Foundation, 35 E Wacker Dr. Ste 2300, Chicago, IL 60601-9607; 1-800-222-5870; jgb@gbf.mhs.compuserve.com.

MISSOULA CHILDREN'S THEATRE

Missoula Children's Theatre uses participation in the performing arts to develop students' life skills (social skills, communication skills, self-discipline, a strong work ethic, an understanding of the team concept and self-esteem). A week-long residency of two professional actors/directors culminates in a full-scale musical production of a classic children's tale involving 50 local performers from K-12 or beyond. The tour teams also run three teacher/student/community workshops which may be selected from a wide variety of theatrical topics. Study guides with classroom exercises and resources are provided host teachers or leaders.

- Contact: Terri Elander, Missoula Children's Theatre, 200 N Adams St, Missoula, MT 59802-4718; 406/ 728-1911; FAX 406/ 721-0637; <http://www.mctinc.org>.

SIGNATURES FROM BIG SKY

SIGNATURES from BIG SKY, Montana Student Art/Literary annual magazine, accepts K-12 student writing and drawings. Submission deadline February 1. Pieces selected by seven regional committees of educators, professionals and students. Copies sent to each Montana school library.

- Contact: *Signatures from Big Sky*, 928 4th Ave., Laurel, MT 59044; 406/ 628-7063.

SPEECH AND DEBATE

Speech and Debate Competitions in the local school hone skills of research, speaking, self-confidence and social cooperation. District and state meets are held in Montana.

- Contact your local high school.

MATH

AMERICAN MATH EXAMINATIONS

American Mathematics Examinations is a program designed to increase interest in mathematics and to develop problem solving ability through a friendly competition. The questions range in difficulty from easy to very difficult in order to appeal to a broad range of students. High School for 9-12, Jr. High for 8th grade and below. Montana H.S. students taking exam in 1996: 3,016 from 56 schools; Jr. High 1996: 1,725 students from 27 schools.

- Contact: Jim Hirstein, Montana Coordinator, American Mathematics Competitions, Department of Mathematical Sciences, UM, Missoula, MT 59812-1032; 406/243-5311; hirstein@selway.umn.edu.

MATH COUNTS

Math Counts is a popular nationwide program offering junior high school teachers and students quality school materials and meaningful competition experiences to enhance interest in and learning of math and technology-related careers. Four million students participated since 1983. School Handbook of problems provided; web site holds problem of the week; variety of tasks to demonstrate students' mastery and develop understanding, including creating and modifying problems.

- Contact: Math Counts, 1420 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314-2794 <http://mathcounts.org>.

MATH OLYMPIAD

Math Olympiad (grades 5-8) requires ingenuity, knowledge and computational expertise of 4-student teams competing in five areas plus one "significant problem" response in a written paper. Mathematical Olympiad Exam (9-12), a 6-hour essay/proof exam, seeks to identify and encourage the most creative secondary math students in the country.

- Contact: American Mathematics Competitions, 1740 Vine St., U of Neb., Lincoln, NE 68588-0658; 402/472-2257; walter@amc.unl.edu.

CHALLENGING PROGRAMS AND COMPETITIONS (CONT.)

SCIENCE

ARTIFACT BOX EXCHANGE

Artifact Box Exchange Network is a biannual interschool project that involves students in the development of advanced research, reference, and reasoning skills through a hands-on simulation activity. Borrowing content from the disciplines of archaeology, geography and science, the Network allows students to collect, tag, reference, and exchange a set of artifacts representative of their locale. The box is exchanged with a "mystery" partner classroom in a distant locale; students find and use available reference books and other resources to identify the country, state or province and town from which the artifacts came.

- Contact: Artifact Box Exchange Network, P.O. Box 9402, Bolton, CT 06043; 203/643-0090.

DATA DETECTIVES EXCHANGE PROJECT

Data Detectives Exchange Project is designed to teach students (Grades 1-9) research design by using real-world activities that require data collection, analysis and the use of higher-level thinking skills. Students are asked to be detectives who gather and analyze personal data about a mystery student and a mystery classroom of students. Using profiles and/or charts and graphs, students form tentative conclusions and hypotheses, check by constructing a brief questionnaire for their partner and partner classroom. Complete directions, readiness and focusing activities provided.

- Contact: The Exchange Network P.O. Box 9402, Bolton, CT 06043-9402; 203/ 643-0090.

ENVIRONTHON

Environthon Montana is a competition for teams of five 9-12th graders involving questions on Wildlife, Aquatics, Soils, Forestry, Current Environmental Issues and Land Use. Offers hands-on instruction and problem solving and motivates students to further skills and knowledge through state and national competitions. Sponsored by Montana Association of Conservation Districts and others.

- Contact: Montana Association of Conservation Districts, 501 N Sanders, Helena, MT 59601; 406/443-5711.

EXPLORAVISION

ExploraVision is a competition for K-12 students to combine imagination with science and technology to create/ explore a vision of the future. Students work in groups of 3-4 with a teacher and optional community advisor, selecting a present-day technology, exploring what it does, how it works and how, when and why it was invented. Students project what that technology could be like in 20 years, the breakthroughs that would be necessary, and the potential consequences of that technology. The vision is described and put on a storyboard. All participants receive a certificate and small gift from Toshiba and NSTA; regional winners receive \$500 to create a videotape of their project. Four national winning team students receive a \$10,000 U.S. savings bond; eight 2nd-place student team members receive a \$5,000 U.S. savings bond. Teacher and parents receive trip to Washington, DC, awards ceremony; schools receive various Toshiba electronic products.

- Contact: Toshiba/NSTA ExploraVision Awards, 1840 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22201.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHY BEE

National Geography Bee, sponsored by National Geographic Society, is a competition to encourage the teaching and study of geography grades 4-8. Packet includes questions and answers, overhead transparency of a map, qualifying test, prizes, media relations pamphlet, and survey. National prize: \$25,000 scholarship. Questions on place names, location of cultural and physical features, distribution and patterns of languages, religions, economic activities, population and political systems, changes through time, geographers' tools, interpretation of maps, graphs and photographs.

Also : series of geography contests on National Geographic's Online "kids" site (www.nationalgeographic.com).

- Contact: National Geography Bee, 1145 17th St NW, Washington, DC 20036-4688; 202/ 828-6659.

SCIENCE AND ART EVENTS

Science Fairs, Art Shows, Musical and Dramatic Performances are local, district and state events that can enhance the specific talents of students in the fields of science and the arts. Contact the local school K-12 for information.

SCIENCE BOWL

Big Sky Regional Science Bowl is a tournament-style academic competition that challenges and recognizes students' knowledge of science and math. Winners (50 teams) will compete in Washington, D.C., at National Science Bowl finals. Teams consist of five high school students (one of whom is alternate) and a coach (preferably science or math teacher) from each participating school. Sponsored by Western Area Power Administration.

- Contact: Gayle R. Nansel, Coordinator, 406/247-7437 or Jane Stowe 406/247-7451.

CHALLENGING PROGRAMS AND COMPETITIONS (CONT.)

SOCIAL STUDIES

BOYS AND GIRLS STATE

Boys State and Girls State, sponsored by the Montana American Legion and Legion Auxiliary, is a government simulation for high school juniors who elect officers as prescribed by Montana election procedure, set up their city government, pass and enforce their own ordinances. They will organize their own legislature where they will present and argue their own bills. They will have their own laws, enforced by their own officials. Each boy and girl will have the opportunity to learn firsthand that government is just what he/she makes it. Applications through local schools; selection based on leadership, character and scholarship. One week in June for Boys State, one week for Girls State.

CLOSE UP WASHINGTON

Close Up Washington, a program of the non-profit, nonpartisan Close Up Foundation has brought more than 370,000 students and educators to Washington, D.C., for the experience of studying government on location. Meetings with Congressional members and other staff; seminars on the judiciary, international relations, and political, social and economic issues; activities on the federal budget, international relations, and legislative process; time to explore Washington; theatre; dance.

- Contact: Close Up Washington, Melissa Williams, 324 N 18 Ave., Bozeman, MT 59715; 800/551-7107; Montana Fax 406/586-5011 or 44 Canal Center Plaza, Alexandria, VA 22314 800/368/5400.

ELECTRONIC MODEL CONGRESS

The Electronic Model Congress (TEMC), a classroom simulation for M.S. and H.S. students, uses telecommunications to connect social studies classrooms in U.S. Goals: to initiate/pass a piece of sound legislation through an electronic vote of the participating communities. Each class has five businesses: legislative office, polling, auditing, special interests, and media. Within a budget, they prepare ads, conduct polling and research to persuade other communities to vote for their bill. Links to curricula, electronic publishing, web page construction, and business uses of telecommunications. Montana schools: Cut Bank, Belt, Fort Benton, Power, Flathead, and Billings.

- Contact: Ray Maier, Academic Dean, Cut Bank High School, 300 First St SE, Cut Bank, MT 59427; 406/873-5629; rayin@cut-bank,mt.us www.cut-bank,mt.us/-raym.

NATIONAL PEACE ESSAY CONTEST

The United States Institute of Peace invites grades 9-12 students to participate in an annual essay contest which explores complex issues in international peace and conflict resolution. Three national winners receive college scholarships of \$5,000, \$2,500, and \$1,000 plus one student from each state a \$750 award and trip to Washington, D.C., in June. The 1997-98 topic asks students to examine two examples of how countries have dealt with persons accused of war crimes and human rights violations after a conflict is over. Applicants are asked to describe how these issues were dealt with in two instances, and if the measures taken supported an enduring peace. Complete guidebook available in August.

- Contact: United States Institute of Peace, National Peace Essay Contest, 1550 M St. NW, Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20005-1708; 202/429-3854; Fax: 202/429-6063; www.usip.org/et.html.

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

The Youth Essay (grades 7, 8 and 9) and **Voice of Democracy** (grades 10, 11 and 12) are programs conducted by local Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) posts, whose winners go on to state and national contests for savings bonds and scholarships. **Youth Essay** requires a 300-400 word written essay on a theme (1996 "My American Hero"), deadline March 15. **Voice of Democracy** requires a written and recorded 3-5 minute essay (theme 1996 "My Voice in Our Democracy"), deadline November 1. The purpose is to allow students to win valuable scholarships and awards while expressing their ideas, thoughts and opinions.

- Contact: Larry H. Longfellow, Adjutant/QM, P.O. Box 6228, Helena, MT 59604; 406/442-5417.

WE THE PEOPLE

We The People's primary goal is to promote civic competence and responsibility among the nation's elementary and secondary students. The instructional program focuses on understanding institutions of American constitutional democracy and the contemporary relevance of the Constitution and Bill of Rights. The culminating activity is a simulated congressional hearing in which students "testify" before a panel of judges. Students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of constitutional principles and have opportunities to evaluate, take, and defend positions on relevant historical and contemporary issues. Since 1987, more than 20 million students and 60,000 educators have participated.

YOUNG LEADERS CONFERENCE

The Young Leaders Conference for 9th grade Latinos organizes community debate teams of about 30 students to explore the finer points of communication as a vital key to leadership. Public speaking, adeptness in the articulation of ideas, and the ability to gain the confidence of others help students grow and mature.

YOUTH FOR JUSTICE

Youth for Justice is a national initiative sponsored by the Department of Justice and DOE for middle school and high school students from all 50 states to attend "summit" meetings to discuss issues, primarily youth violence and how students can make a difference. State leaders prepare the state summit. The program can be combined with Learn and Serve to extend its effects. Promotes leadership, peer mediation skills, and inclusion of materials into regular schools' curricula.

LOOK FOR CHALLENGES OUTSIDE SCHOOL AND EXTENSIONS OFFERED IN YOUR SCHOOL CURRICULUM

APPRENTICESHIPS and MENTORSHIPS 9-12

Local businesses and industries: retail, manufacturing, service, etc.
Local medical facilities: dental, optical, medical, therapeutic, veterinarian, etc.
Local professionals in law, education, finance
Local artists, writers, dancers, actors/directors, musicians, radio and TV personnel
Local skilled trades workers: construction, plumbing, masonry, electrical, etc.
High school teachers, college professors, college students
Local religious leaders, social workers, community service leaders
Internet communication with the above
Job shadowing (workers in different sites) and Educational shadowing (older students in different sites)

COMMUNITY SERVICE (Documented) K-12

Church, Sunday School teaching, child care, music accompaniment, choir
Nursing homes, hospitals, volunteer work for the elderly or ill
Political campaigns, blood drives, other money-raising or humanitarian events
Community projects, building, Habitat for Humanity, environmental efforts
Volunteer house/animal care
Peer tutoring and mediation

GROUPS K-12

Boy and Girl Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, Key Club, Rainbow and Demolay, language clubs, art clubs, science clubs, vocational student organizations like Business Professionals of America (BPA), Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA), Future Farmers of America (FFA), Future Homemakers of America (FHA), Technical Students Association (TSA) and Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (VICA), health clubs, Student Council, Race Against Drugs (RAD), Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE), service clubs (Beta), athletics, intermural or intramural sports, YMCA, YWCA.

FAMILY BUSINESS PARTICIPATION (Documented) K-12

A summary or record of the student's specific jobs and responsibilities in a family business will be useful information when applying for higher education, jobs, and scholarships. Ranching, for instance, usually involves children in multiple responsibilities from an early age, like animal care, machinery operation and repair, painting and harvesting, etc. These experiences can prove a student's responsibility, maturity, and time management skills on applications for school and work.

CREATIVE OPTIONS IN THE ARTS

Private lessons, camps and competitions in:

Music
Art
Drama
Dance
Creative Writing
Computer Graphics
Video Film Production

A PARENT CAN HELP

A parent's expectations are a basic element in a child's educational choices.

Encourage your child's academic pursuits, career planning, and occupational awareness:

- ✓ Provide a dictionary and thesaurus and practice learning new words
- ✓ Provide newspapers, magazines, and books; encourage reading and frequent use of libraries
- ✓ Encourage your child to take "difficult" courses such as Algebra and a foreign language
- ✓ Foster computer literacy and mastery of applications (word processing, spreadsheets, and data bases)
- ✓ Praise your child's good efforts in school, not just good grades
- ✓ Help schedule and balance time wisely; Set up a good study atmosphere and routine
- ✓ Encourage strong study skills, self-discipline, and time-management
- ✓ Encourage your child to take an interest inventory; ask your child to explain and discuss the results with you and other supportive adults to get feedback and advice
- ✓ Participate in postsecondary education planning; ask questions about your child's education
- ✓ Get to know your child's teachers and counselors
- ✓ Foster situations in which your child will learn and experience teamwork and cooperation
- ✓ Use the internet and printed resources with your child to explore careers, work together to gather occupational information and research prospective postsecondary institutions
- ✓ Introduce your child to adults who work in jobs or industries in which your child has an interest and help them learn to use people resources to gather information and advice
- ✓ Encourage intercultural awareness; Share with your child your own history/traditions
- ✓ Encourage job shadowing and visits to a variety of campuses, businesses, and other working and learning sites that might meet your child's needs and interests
- ✓ Stress good communication — oral, written, and electronic
- ✓ Help your child speak correct English, enunciate clearly, and communicate with confidence
- ✓ Get to know your child's friends and their parents; encourage your child to make friends with others who take education seriously
- ✓ Help your child stay alert to the changing nature and demands of the global workplace
- ✓ Encourage a holistic view of knowledge by making connections between various subjects and showing interrelatedness in the curriculum your child is taking; challenge your child to look for ways that what has been learned can be applied or is used by people outside the classroom
- ✓ Work closely with counselors, administrators and teachers at every grade level to create a cooperative team of teachers, counselors, relatives, and friends to help your child achieve his/her goals
- ✓ Put your child's best interests first in the decisions you support and the plans you make. Your child's (not yours or someone else's) future and happiness and "fit" is the primary concern
- ✓ Teach your child a simple decision-making strategy (popular models have four to seven steps) so they understand and can apply sound decision-making skills throughout their planning and lifetime

KEEP A PERSONAL PORTFOLIO K-12

"A portfolio is a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student's efforts, progress and achievements in one or more areas. The collection must include student participation in selecting contents, the criteria for selection, the criteria for judging merit, and evidence of student reflection" (Paulson, F.L., Paulson, P.R. & Meyers, C.A., 1991). Such a collection is useful for both the student's insight and future educational opportunities. A student will be able to see his/her growth patterns, new or lacking areas of expertise, and general attitudes about education. The portfolio can be used to advantage in applying for opportunities in church, school, community, camps, jobs, scholarships and higher education institutions.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

ACT: American College Testing Program Exam. Test used by many colleges as one of the criteria for admission. It measures both acquired knowledge and reasoning and consists of four parts: English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science Reasoning. It is 2 hours, 55 minutes long and is scored on a scale of 1-36, with 36 being the highest. Students typically take the ACT in the spring of their junior year or the fall of their senior year.

AP: Advanced Placement Program. A cooperative effort between secondary schools and colleges and universities. Tests are administered each May whereby students may qualify for college credit by examination. Subject areas covered include arts and languages, natural sciences, computer science, social sciences, history and mathematics. AP courses to help students prepare may be available in high school, but are not required for students to take the exams. In 1996, each exam cost \$72. Each college sets its own scoring criteria for acceptance of AP for credit.

CLEP: College Level Examination Program. The most widely accepted national testing program offering exams or standardized tests whereby students receive college credit by examination without taking courses. Offers 5 general exams and 29 subject exams. Each test takes 90 minutes. There is a cost for each test (\$42 in 1996).

College/University: A "college" is generally focused on 4-year undergraduate education whereas a "university" is more comprehensive and includes graduate, as well as undergraduate education.

College of Technology: COTs are institutions which are part of the Montana University System and which grant 2-year Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degrees, Associate of Science (A.S.) and transfer degrees, as well as certificates in a variety of technical fields. Credits earned toward the A.A.S. degrees may transfer into the 4-year units of the System. These institutions are located in Billings, Butte, Great Falls, Helena, and Missoula. All Colleges of Technology participate in **Tech Prep** programs offering college credit for high achievement in high school classes which have been articulated with courses in COT 2-year or certificate programs of study.

Common Application: One application form shared by colleges and accepted by many 4-year institutions. It is a great time saver for students applying to many colleges.

Community College: An institution offering Associate of Arts or Sciences (A.A. or A.S.) and Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) 2-year degrees which can be used for technical training or transfer to a baccalaureate-granting institution. Montana has three public community colleges: Dawson Community College, Miles Community College, and Flathead Valley Community College.

Degrees: Degree or Certification: These "pieces of paper" certify that you have completed an educational program and met its requirements. Degrees awarded for 2-year programs are the Associate of Arts (A.A.), Associate of Science (A.S.), and Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.). Degrees awarded for completion of a 4-year program of college study are the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.), Bachelor of Applied Technology (B.A.T.), Bachelor of Science (B.S.), and Bachelor of Applied Science (B.A.S.) degrees. Certificates are awarded for completion of formal programs of study of a designated length usually less than two years.

Early Admission: A program or practice that allows a student to be admitted to a college and to take classes or enroll part-time before or during the senior year in high school.

Financial Aid Package: any combination of scholarships, grants, loans, or work/study received by a student to help pay for education expenses. Financial Aid includes:

Grants or Scholarships: (awards which do not need to be repaid which are awarded based on outstanding academic achievement, demonstrated talent, or other criteria)

College Work-Study: (a form of aid in which students work part-time at the college while attending), **Loans** (to be repaid with interest when the student leaves school), and

Pell Grants: (federal grants which do not need to be paid back and which are awarded to undergraduate students based upon financial need).

Financial Need: the difference between what it costs to attend a college and what the family and student can afford or is expected to pay.

G.P.A.: Grade-Point Average -- an average of all grades received for credit at a given institution.

Job Shadowing: close involvement with an adult at work in order to better understand what his/her job entails.

Major: the subject, area of concentration, or field of study in which a student chooses to specialize. Most 4-year colleges do not require students to declare a major until the junior year. In some 2-year college programs, students must complete certain prerequisite courses before they can be admitted into a specific program of study.

Open Admission: admission granted to most applicants without using GPA, class rank, test scores, etc., as criteria. Colleges with open admission policies often have extensive programs designed to provide remedial or developmental help to students who enroll with academic deficiencies. Open admission colleges may still require that the students be high school graduates or have earned a G.E.D, and applicants must meet any other established admissions requirements.

P-ACT+ (Preliminary American College Test) and PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test): Shorter versions of the tests offered in high school for college admissions. The preliminary tests are designed as practice tests and may also be used to identify merit scholarships candidates.

Recommendation: a written assessment of the student's aptitudes, abilities, and interests, written by a teacher or counselor or supervisor and used by colleges, universities or employers in the admission or hiring process.

Registrar: 2-year or 4-year college official designated to register students. The registrar's office also assesses tuition and fees, handles transcripts, and maintains student records.

Transcript: the official record of courses a student takes in grades 9-12 sent directly from the high school to the college, university or college of technology, or technical school.

Tribal Colleges: similar to community colleges, these institutions are located on each of Montana's seven reservations: Blackfeet Community College (Browning), Dull Knife Memorial College (Lame Deer), Fort Belknap College (Harlem), Fort Peck Community College (Poplar), Little Big Horn College (Crow Agency), Salish Kootenai College (Pablo), and Stone Child College (Rocky Boy).

SAT: Scholastic Aptitude Test. Test used by many colleges and required by some highly selective schools for admission purposes. The SAT is sponsored by the College Board and measures acquired knowledge, verbal and mathematics aptitude, and reasoning. It is three hours long and each part (verbal and math) of the test is scored on a scale of 200-800. Individual colleges set their own scoring standards for admission.

School-to-Work Programs: programs that help orient students to work place demands and expectations and encourage students to explore and plan for various career fields by giving them experience in the work place and connecting the curriculum to their out-of-school experience.

View Book: a brochure or publication containing basic information about a school or college, outstanding features, and often selected photographs. It is intended to attract prospective students and provide information to inquirers.

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THE MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Commissioner of Higher Education, Dr. Richard Crofts, 2500 Broadway, Helena 59620 (444-6570; fax 444-1469)

4-year Colleges and Universities:

Montana State University—Billings, 1500 N. 30th St., Billings 59101 (657-2011; fax 2051)

Chancellor, Dr. Ronald Sexton

Montana State University—Bozeman, Bozeman 59717, (994-0211; fax 994-2893)

President, Dr. Michael Malone

Montana State University—Northern, PO Box 7751, Havre 59501 (265-3700; fax 265-3777)

Chancellor, Dr. Michael Rao

Montana Tech of The University of Montana, Butte 59701 (496-4101; fax 496-4387)

Chancellor, Dr. Lindsay Norman

The University of Montana—Missoula, Missoula 59812 (243-0211; fax 243-2797)

President, Dr. George M. Dennison

Western Montana College of The University of Montana, 710 S. Atlantic, Dillon 59725

(683-7011; fax 683-7493)—Chancellor, Dr. Sheila Stearns

Colleges of Technology:

College of Technology of The University of Montana—Missoula, 909 South Avenue West, Missoula 59801

(243-7811; fax 243-7899)—Dean, Dr. Dennis Lerum

Division of Technology, Montana Tech of The University of Montana, 25 Basin Creek Road, Butte 59701

(496-3701; fax 496-4387)—Dean, Jane Baker

Helena College of Technology of The University of Montana, 1115 N. Roberts Street, Helena 59601

(444-6800; fax 444-6892)—Dean, Dr. Alex Capdeville

MSU College of Technology—Billings, 3803 Central Avenue, Billings 59102

(656-4445; fax 652-1729)—Dean, Robert J. Carr

MSU College of Technology—Great Falls, 2100 16th Avenue South, Great Falls 59405

(771-4300; fax 771-4317)—Dean, Willard R. Weaver

PUBLIC COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Dawson Community College, 300 College Drive, Glendive 59330 (365-3396; 365-8132)—President, Donald Kettner

Flathead Valley Community College, 777 Grandview Drive, Kalispell 59901 (756-3822; fax 756-3815)—President, Dr. David N. Beyer

Miles Community College, 2715 Dickinson Street, Miles City 59301 (232-3031; fax 232-5705)—President, Dr. Frank Williams

PRIVATE COLLEGES

Carroll College, 1601 N. Benton Ave., Helena 59625 (447-4300; fax 447-4533)—President, Dr. Matthew J. Quinn

University of Great Falls, 1301 20th St. S., Great Falls 59405 (791-5300; fax 791-5393)—President, Dr. Frederick W. Gilliard

Rocky Mountain College, 1511 Poly Drive, Billings 59102-1796 (657-1000; fax 259-9751)—President, Dr. Arthur H. DeRosier, Jr.

TRIBAL COLLEGES

Blackfeet Community College, Box 819, Browning 59417—President, Ms. Carol Murray

(338-5441; fax 338-7808)

Dull Knife Memorial College, P.O. Box 98, Lame Deer 59043—President, Dr. Alonzo Spang

(477-6215; fax 477-6219)

Fort Belknap College, P.O. Box 159, Harlem 59526-0159—President, Dr. Phil Shortman

(353-2607; fax 353-2841)

Fort Peck Community College, P.O. Box 398, Poplar 59255—President, Dr. James E. Shanley

(768-5551; fax 768-5552)

Little Big Horn Community College, Box 370, Crow Agency 59022—President, Dr. Janine Pretty On Top

(638-2228; fax 638-7213)

Salish-Kootenai Community College, P.O. Box 117, Pablo 59855—President, Dr. Joseph McDonald

(675-4800; fax 675-4801)

Stone Child College, P.O. Box 1082, Box Elder 59521—President, Steve Galbavy

(395-4313; fax 395-4836)

HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC PLANNING GUIDE

This worksheet is designed for you to list the courses you will take or have taken to fulfill these college preparatory requirements. If you have questions about particular courses or specific college requirements, please see your high school counselor. Your high school has a list of courses which meet this curriculum.

Montana University System College Preparatory Requirements		9th Grade Courses	10th Grade Courses	11th Grade Courses	12th Grade Courses	TOTAL YEARS
CATEGORY I: Four years of English	SEM 1					(4 YEARS* NEEDED)
	SEM 2					
CATEGORY II: Three years of mathematics ending with Algebra II	SEM 1					(3 YEARS* NEEDED)
	SEM 2					
CATEGORY III: Three years of Social Studies including Global Studies, American History, and Government, Economics, Indian History or other third-year course	SEM 1					(3 YEARS* NEEDED)
	SEM 2					
CATEGORY IV: Two years of lab science. One year must be Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry, or Physics; the other year can be one of those sciences or another approved college prep lab science	SEM 1					(2 YEARS* NEEDED)
	SEM 2					
CATEGORY V: Two years chosen from the following: •foreign languages •computer sciences •visual and performing arts •vocational/technical education	SEM 1					(2 YEARS* NEEDED)
	SEM 2					
OTHER COURSES TAKEN	SEM 1					
	SEM 2					

Education and training beyond the high school level is becoming more and more important for unlocking the doors to economic and employment opportunities. Acquiring further education and training requires significant time, effort, and careful planning, as well as significant financial investment. In order to be ready to pursue higher education, parents and students must begin their planning early. This monograph offers suggestions for parents and students from seventh through twelfth grades.

The Office of Public Instruction acknowledges many sources of information provided in this manual. The United States Department of Education, the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, Phi Delta Kappa, and the Higher Education Information Center of the Youth Programs Department in Boston, Massachusetts, are particularly noted. In addition, a special thank you goes to Shirley Olson of Laurel, Montana, and Donna Berkhof of Great Falls, Montana, who served as primary writers and editors for the manual. We hope that Montana parents, educators, and students will find the information of assistance. We encourage schools to personalize this manual for use in their schools. To facilitate this, the contents of this monograph are available on METNET.
